

FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

14-41

ORLEANS

EAS.607

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Eastham Center

Photograph



Address: 30 Lawton Road

Historic Name: Joshua and Clarissa Cole House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: pre- 1858

Source: historic maps, visual analysis

Style/Form: Colonial with Greek Revival modifications

Architect/Builder: undetermined

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick, concrete piers, concrete parging

Wall/Trim: wood shingles

Roof: asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures: garage/outbuilding

Major Alterations (*with dates*): two-story rear ell modification (c. 1850); dormers and front porch (c. 1920)

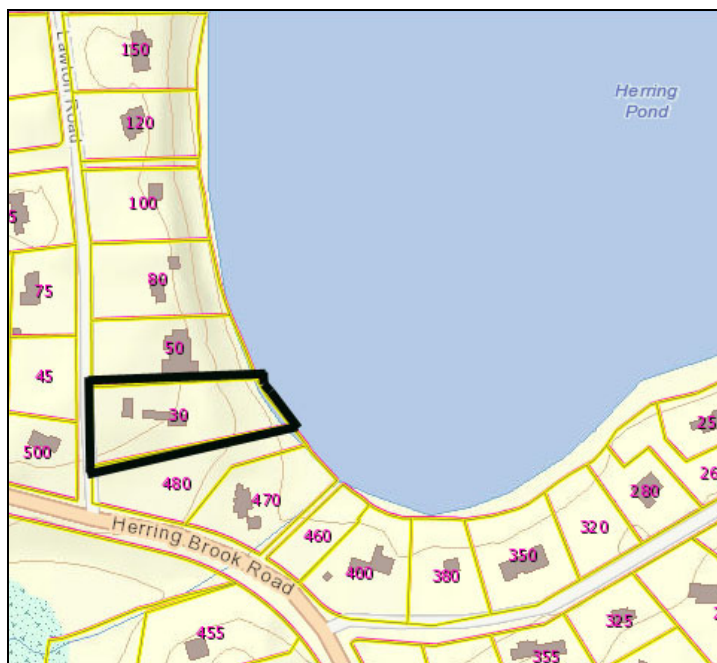
Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1 acre

Setting: The subject property is located on the southwest shore Herring Pond and is fronted by Lawson Rd. on the west, just north of where it forks off from Herring Brook Rd. The surrounding land uses are all single family residential.

Locus Map (north at top)



Recorded by: Larson Fisher Associates, Inc. with Kathryn Grover

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2013

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

30 LAWTON ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

This homestead could indeed date to 1725 (as the Assessor lists) based on its appearance which has elements of an 18th-century dwelling; however an inspection of the interior finishes and construction details would be required to confirm whether this is a feasible date. A one-story core building with three-bay front facade (facing Herring Pond and an early roadway along its shore) has the squat form, gable roof and massive brick interior chimney characteristic of a colonial house on the Cape.¹ First floor windows on the south side are nine-over-six; the headers are molded. What was probably originally a one-story rear service/kitchen wing would have been bumped up to its present two-story, one-pile form. This rear ell, with an endwall brick chimney, was outfitted with a trabeated Greek Revival-style door surround with sidelights which signals it became the new front entry. A one-story, six-bay service wing with two entrances was then added to its rear (west). The lean-to off its west end is probably a later addition still. Of wood plank construction the early house facing the pond has also had front and rear shed-roofed dormers added and a full front screen porch. Corner boards are carried throughout and the entire building is clad with wood shingles. The brick foundations of the easternmost section and rear ell further suggests early construction dates.

A wood frame outbuilding lying on higher ground (at the grade of Lawton Road) west of the house has a sliding and swing doors on both its front and back (east and west) sides. It is two bays deep with six-over-six windows and is clad with wood shingles. The gable roof is topped with a cupola. Retaining walls are used around the west end of the rear ells on the house to mediate the grade change between the house and outbuilding. Open lawn around the south and east sides of the house is punctuated by mature deciduous trees, while mature evergreen trees are located mainly along the north. A short driveway off Lawton Road provides access to the property, up to the outbuilding that may now serve as a garage.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Town of Eastham Assessor dates the house at 30 Lawton Road to 1725, but deeds for the property cannot be reliably traced earlier than 1890. A deed that year refers to the property as the "Joshua Cole Place" and also cites an adjacent "Josiah Cole Place." Joshua Cole, Jr. (1833-83) and Josiah M. Cole (1830-66) were the sons of Joshua Cole (1804-72) and Clarissa Smith Cole (1802-77). The 1858 and 1880 maps of Eastham label the house "J. Cole." If the house was built before about 1830, it was very likely the home of the father of Joshua Cole, Sr., Timothy Cole (1776-1843) and his wife Azubah Nickerson Cole (1774-1820). His marriage and death records state that he was born in Orleans, but no birth record has yet been located, and Timothy Cole is not listed in the 1798 Direct Tax lists for Eastham. He probably moved to Eastham after he married Azubah Nickerson, an Eastham native, in 1799, and he is listed in Eastham censuses from 1800 to 1840. An 1801 deed has survives in which it states that Timothy Cole acquired land formerly belonging to Hatsel Nickerson in the Great Neck section of Eastham and bordering Herring Pond. This deed may have included the land occupied by the house at 30 Lawton Road, though no building is mentioned in the deed.² The order of enumeration in the 1820 and 1840 censuses indicates that Timothy Cole was living in this area, if not in this house. Timothy Cole's parents are not listed in any family history or vital record; his death record states that his parents were not known. Thus two possibilities exist: If built in 1725, the house on the subject property may have been an earlier Cole family homestead, though to whom it belonged cannot be determined from available records. Alternatively, it may have belonged earlier to Hatsel Nickerson (1722-1793). The 1801 deed also cited the transfer of "all the rights that Hatsel Nickerson had to the estate that was his father's," which would suggest the possibility that the 30 Lawton Road house was built by Hatsel's father William Nickerson, who died sometime after 1759.

The 1850 census lists Joshua Cole as a forty-five-year-old farmer with \$2735 in real property. The agricultural schedules in that year's census record him as having 70 improved and 15 unimproved acres and a farm value of \$1200, high for Eastham. In his household at that time were his wife, Clarissa, and sons, Josiah M., then twenty-one, and Joshua, then fifteen. The 1860 census enumerates him with \$3000 in real property and \$2000 in personal property. His household at that time included his eldest daughter Rebecca and a sixty-one-year-old Timothy Cole, a laborer who may have been his older brother, and the family of his son Josiah, then thirty years old. Joshua Cole, Jr. is enumerated next in the census as a twenty-five-year-old farmer with no real property in a household with his wife Sophia Kendrick Cobb Cole and son Austin E. Cole (b. 1858). In 1870 the real estate of Joshua Cole, Sr. was valued at \$1500. By then his son Josiah had died, and Josiah's widow, Mary, and children, Wilbur, Elsa, and Josiah are members of the preceding household. Mary had \$450 in real property. Preceding Mary Cole in the census listing is the household of Joshua Cole, Jr., then a fisherman with \$650 in real property and living with his wife and children Austin, Abby, and Mary.

Joshua Cole, Sr. died in 1872 and his son and namesake died in 1883. Between 1890 and 1906 much of the Cole family land that had passed to Joshua Cole, Jr. and his brother Josiah was acquired by Ida A. Lawton of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Born Ida Hill about 1850, she married Lowell teacher George Field Lawton in 1877. He was the son of the Massachusetts Cotton Mills superintendent, James Lawton. George Lawton served three months in a Massachusetts infantry regiment during the Civil War

¹ The 1858 map depicts a roadway nearer to the shore with J. Cole's house in the location of the present dwelling; in addition Lawton Road is a 20th century development.

² Timothy Doane, Orleans, to Timothy Cole, Eastham, carpenter, 25 December 1801, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds (hereafter cited as BCD) Eastham Book 1, 999041:55.

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and then attended Williams College from which he graduated in 1868. He was a teacher in Lowell for five years and then served as the city's superintendent of schools from 1886 to 1891. He was also the city solicitor in 1880-82 and 1885-86, though his formal training in the law could not be documented. By 1910 the Lawtons had moved to Cambridge, where he was one of two Middlesex County judges for probate and insolvency.³ He and his wife Ida and unmarried daughter Helen lived in Cambridge for decades.

In August 1890 Ida Lawton acquired the Joshua Cole farm from Austin E. Cole, the son of Joshua Cole, Jr.⁴ The property included the entire homestead farm except for an asparagus lot along Herring Pond, and it bordered the property of Wilbur S. Cole, who owned and occupied his father Josiah Cole's house, and the property of Myrick Clark. In 1893, 1900, and 1906 Lawton acquired additional property from the Cole family.⁵ The 1905 Barnstable County map attached the name "Judge Lawton" to a house on the west side of Herring Pond, though its location isn't shown to be precisely the same as the Cole property on earlier maps.

The Lawton family owned 30 Lawton Road until 1956. In 1955 the heirs of the Lawtons' daughter Helen filed a subdivision plan for the property and sold Lots 5, 6, and that part of Lot 4 that comprises the subject property to Robert H. and Edythe D. Dexter of Milton. The Dexters further subdivided the property and owned it for three years. Lawrence J. Fredella Sr. and his wife Margaret of New York City acquired 30 Lawton Road from the Dexters in 1959 and owned it until 1981, when they sold it to Jerome L. and Toni F. Stoker of the Bronx. Toni Stoker owned the property until 2006, when she sold it to the current owner, Lawton Properties.⁶

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MAPS

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³ "Judge George F. Lawton," *Cambridge Tribune*, 30 May 1914.

⁴ Austin E. Cole to Ida A. Lawton, Lowell, 21 August 1890, BCD 196:21.

⁵ See Wilbur S. Cole to Ida A. Lawton, 31 August 1893, BCD 208:595; Austin E. Cole to Ida A. Lawton, 11 July 1900, BCD 246:136; and Wilbur S. Cole, Josiah A. Cole, and George E. Gill, to Ida A. Lawton, Cambridge, 15 September 1906, BCD 274:574.

⁶ Harvard Trust Company, executor will Helen L. Lawton, Cambridge, to Robert H. and Edythe D. Dexter, 23 August 1956, BCD 951:582; Robert H. and Edythe D. Dexter, Milton, to Lawrence J. Fredella Sr. and Margaret E. Fredella, New York NY, 26 September 1959, BCD 1056:560; Margaret E. Fredella to Jerome L. and Toni F. Stoker, 18 August 1981, BCD 3347:61; Toni K. Stoker, aka Toni Stoker, Cincinnati OH, to Lawton Properties, 2 November 2006, BCD 21538:192. See also "Plan of Land in Eastham Mass. Surveyed for the Heirs of Helen L. Lawton," November 1955, Barnstable County Registry of Deeds Plan (hereafter cited as BCP) 124:151; Subdivision of Land in Eastham, Mass. As Surveyed for Robert H. Dexter and Edythe D. Dexter," September 1956, BCP 136:153; and "Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. as Surveyed for Robert H. Dexter et ux," August 1959, BCP 151:85. Lawton Properties, LLC based in Cincinnati, OH and registered as a foreign corporation in Massachusetts was organized 6/19/2006; Valarie Stoker and Eliza Stoker are its managers/authorized agents.

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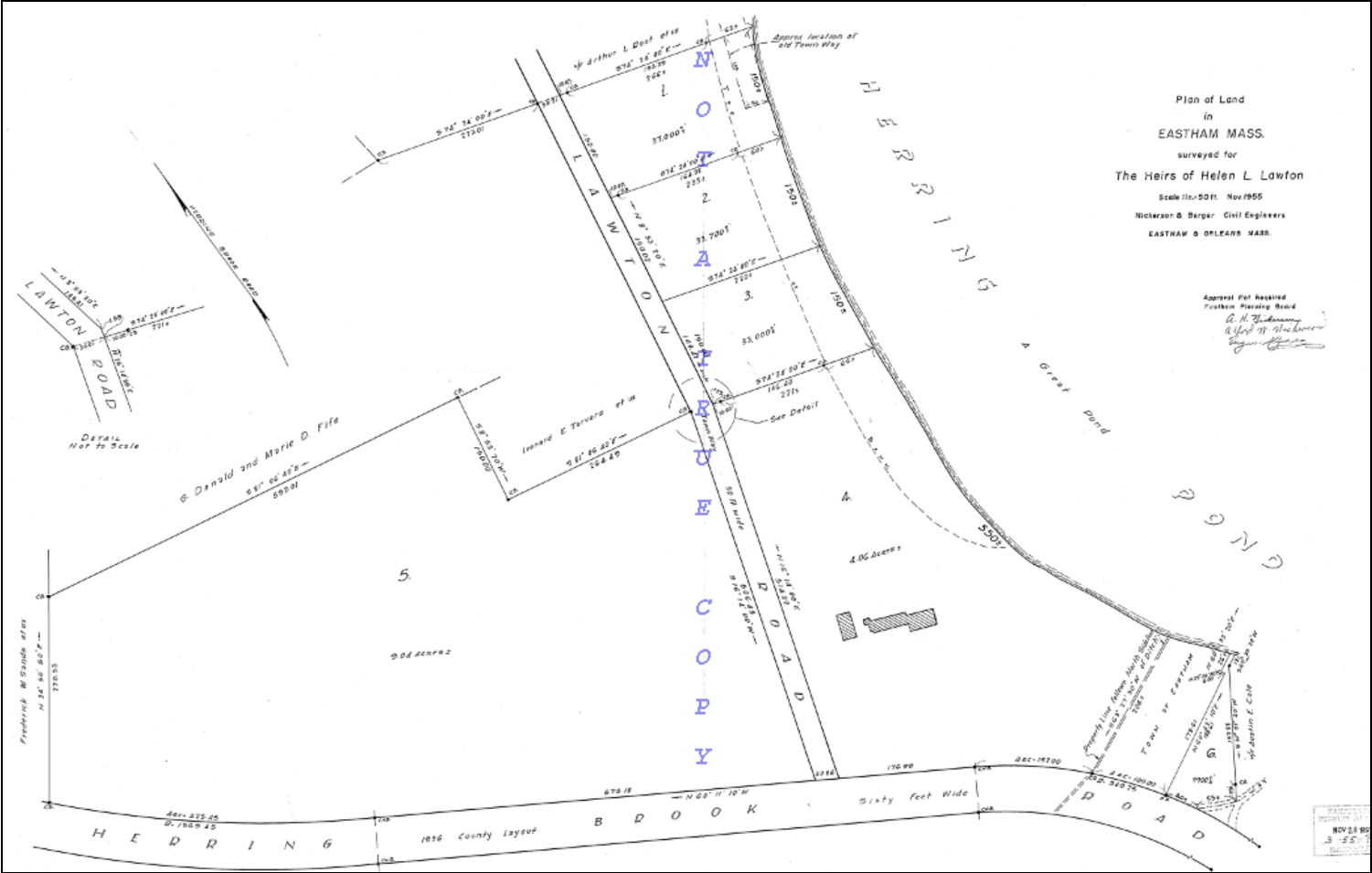
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SUPPLEMENTARY IMAGES



The Lawton heirs' subdivision plan of 1955 (BCP 124:151): Parcel 4 is 30 Lawton Road.

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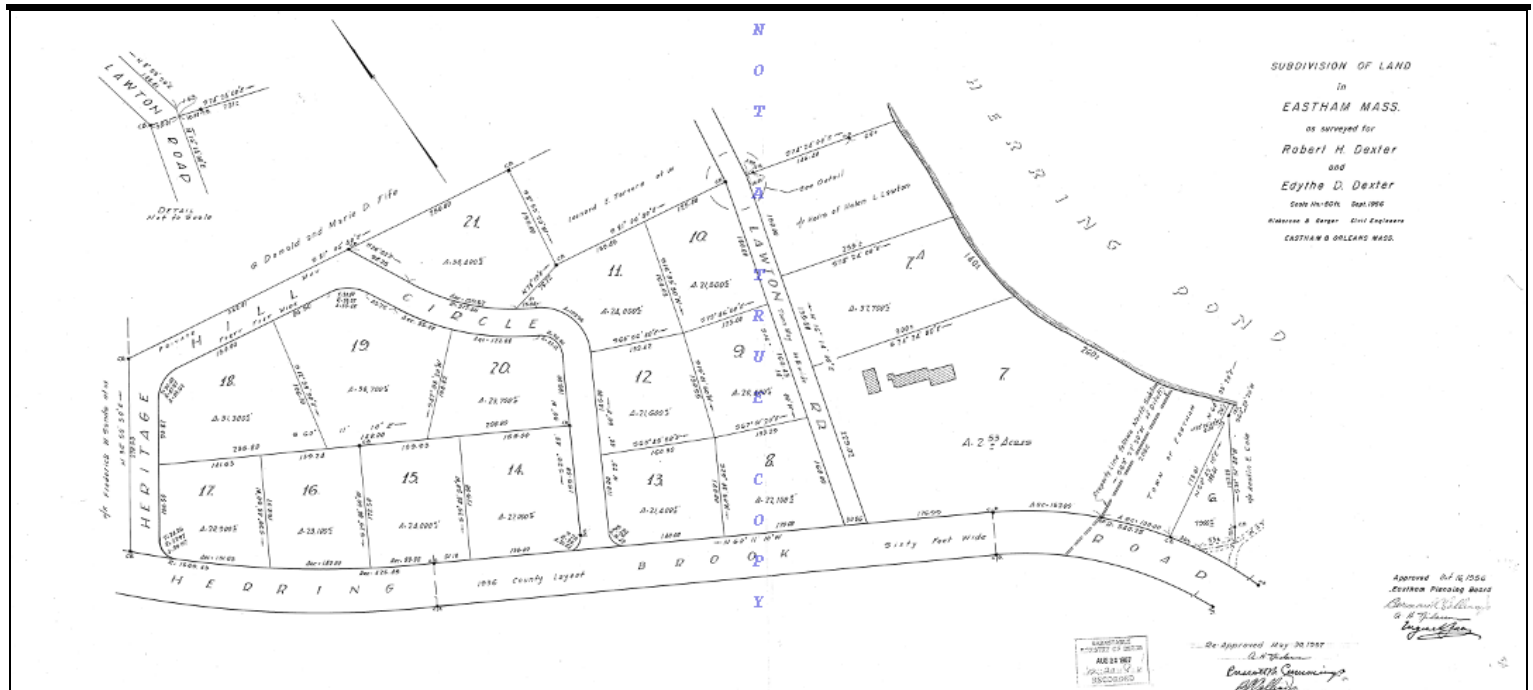
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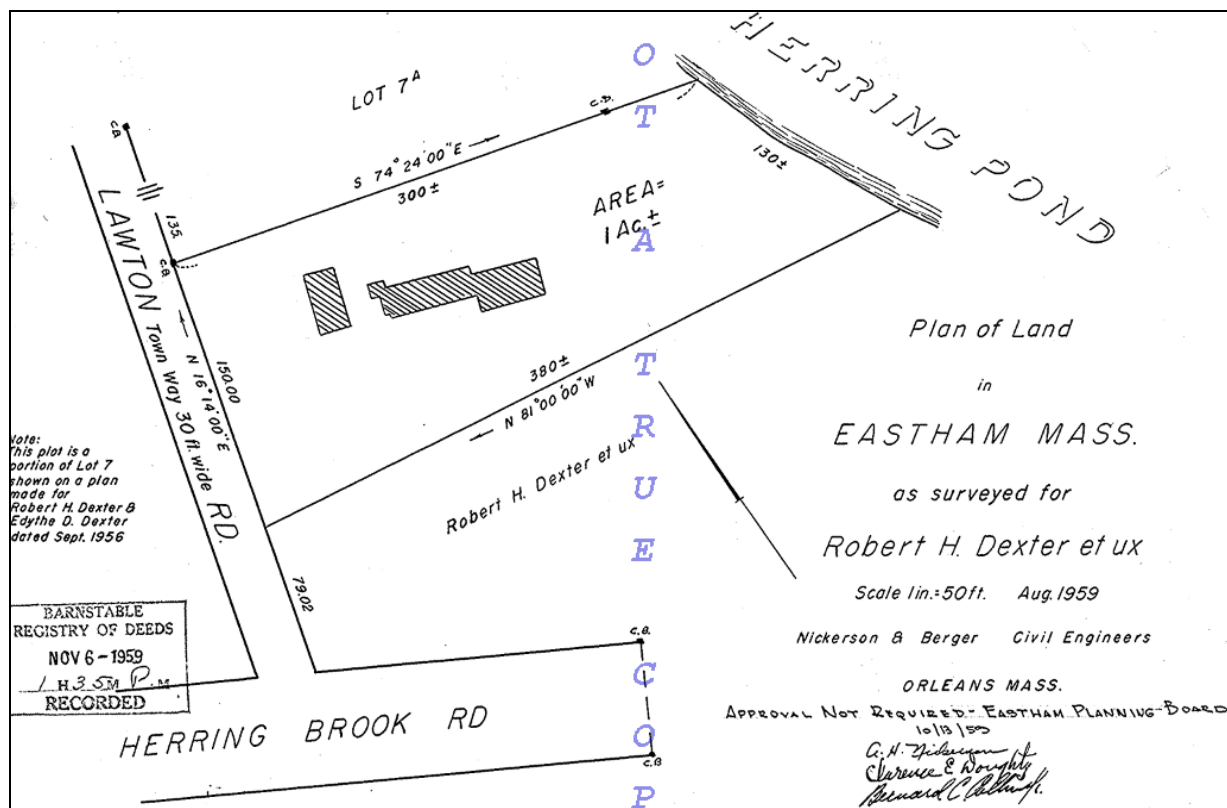
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The 1956 Dexter subdivision plan (BCP 136:153) created 21 house lots, subdividing Lot 7 so as to reduce 30 Lawton Road to 4.2 acres.



The 1959 Dexter plan (BCP 151:85) further subdivided Lot 7 of the 1956 plan leaving 30 Lawton Road as the current 1-acre lot.

PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2012-2013 unless otherwise noted)

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View from south, southwest.



View from west.

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View from east.



View from southeast.



View from northwest.



View of outbuilding/garage from northwest.



View from northeast of outbuilding.